

State of Vermont to prosecute police officers charged with obstruction of justice. While a partner at Sheehey Furlong Rendall & Behm, Tom's firm represented the State of Vermont in its litigation against the tobacco industry. And of course I must discuss one of Tom's finest accomplishments, his 1979 graduation from St. Michael's College in Colchester, VT, my alma mater.

Tom has a keen legal and will bring a great deal of experience and enthusiasm to this important law enforcement post. Congratulations to Tom, his wife Wendy, and his entire family on his confirmation today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Thomas D. Anderson, of Vermont, to be United States Attorney for the District of Vermont for the term of four years?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now return to legislative session.

The Senator from Michigan.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007—Continued

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, as a result of the extraordinarily hard work, dedication, and cooperation, on a bipartisan basis, of every one of our committee members, and our extraordinary staff, as well as the assistance of really superb floor staffs on both sides of the aisle, we have just seen a unanimous passage of the Defense authorization bill.

As I mentioned before, this is a real tribute to our chairman. I am going to save all the accolades, however, for still a later time. When the chairman brings back a conference report, we will then, hopefully, have enough people here on the floor who can both join in the kudos and hear the applause for our chairman.

Our staff loses a great deal of sleep to get this bill passed. And there is never enough attention that is paid to staff. No matter how many times we take a moment to just say thanks to our staff, it never comes close to paying the tribute which is really owed to them.

Charlie Abell, who is the majority staff director, is just a wonderful human being as well as a gifted professional. He and all the other members of your staff, I say to Senator WARNER, are really, really terrific. And I cannot say enough about Rick DeBobes, Peter Levine, and all of the members of my staff. Rick, our minority staff director, leads a truly extraordinary staff.

Mr. President, I guess the best way I can express my gratitude is to ask that the names of my staff be printed in the

RECORD at this time. I ask unanimous consent that a list of their names be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the list was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Jon Clark, Chris Cowart, Dan Cox, Madelyn Creedon, Rick DeBobes, Brie Eisen, Evelyn Farkas, Richard Fieldhouse, Creighton Greene, Bridget Higgins, Mike Kuiken, Gary Leeling, Peter Levine, Mike McCord, Bill Monahan, Mike Noblet, Arun Seraphin.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, also, talking about accolades, I want to single out Senator CANTWELL for an amendment which she authored relative to the replacement of National Guard equipment that has been left in Iraq and Afghanistan. The absence of this equipment has undermined the ability of the National Guard units to train and to meet the requirements in their home States. And the Cantwell amendment is going to require the Department to establish a comprehensive plan to recapitalize or to replace this equipment.

It is going to be an essential addition, replacement for the National Guard. There was not enough attention paid to this amendment as things kind of flew through here. I want to thank Senator CANTWELL for her leadership in making sure our National Guard is well equipped and given the support they deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, if I might join my distinguished colleague from Michigan, it has been a privilege for me, as it has for these 28 years we have been together, to work as partners and in many respects equals. He has been chairman of the committee. I have been chairman of the committee. We have both occupied positions of chairman and ranking member in these many years that we have been fortunate to serve on this committee together, and we have a very outstanding group of colleagues who are members of the committee. I thank my good friend for these many years. I am very proud, as he is, of this piece of legislation, which at this critical juncture in our Nation's history, with our forces serving in over 60 Nation across the world, and their families here at home are with them, we have them in mind at all times and, indeed, a very significant group of Civil Service employees who likewise are serving our Nation in their capacities with the Department of Defense and other departments and agencies related to our national security.

Senator LEVIN mentioned particularly our senior staff, our full staff, as a matter of fact. In many ways, some of the juniors work harder than seniors some days, but I won't get into that. I best leave that to my able staff director, Charlie Abell, as you leave that to your staff director. But we are fortunate to have these two staff directors and these magnificent staffs. They

really are professional staffs. The appointment of our staff, I don't even recall inquiring as to the political affiliation of so many of these individuals that I have had the privilege of working with these many years in the Senate. But indeed, they do work long hours. Their reward is not the pay. Their reward is a sense of satisfaction, as it is for you and me and members of our committee and, indeed, the Members of the Senate, of what we are trying to do on behalf of the uniformed men and women of the Armed Forces and their families and their civilian counterparts.

I thank my distinguished colleague.

I ask unanimous consent that S. 2766, as amended, be printed as passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed immediately to the consideration en bloc of S. 2767 through S. 2769, Calendar Order Nos. 427, 428, and 429, that all after the enacting clause of those bills be stricken and that the appropriate portion of S. 2766, as amended, be inserted in lieu thereof, according to the schedule which I am sending to the desk; that these bills be advanced to third reading and passed, the motion to reconsider en bloc be laid upon the table, and that the above actions occur without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The bill (S. 2767) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes, was considered, ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed, as amended.

(The text of the bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The bill (S. 2768) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for military construction, and for other purposes, was considered, ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed, as amended.

(The text of the bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL SECURITY ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The bill (S. 2769) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for defense activities of the Department of Energy, and for other purposes, was considered,

ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed, as amended.

(The text of the bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

G.V. "SONNY" MONTGOMERY NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, with respect to H.R. 5122, Calendar Order No. 431, the House-passed version of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2007, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate turn to its immediate consideration, that all after the enacting clause be stricken and the text of S. 2766, as passed, be submitted in lieu thereof, that the bill be advanced to third reading and passed, and that the Senate insist on its amendment to the bill and agree to or request a conference, as appropriate, with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees; that the motion to reconsider the above-mentioned votes be laid upon the table; and that the foregoing occur without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill (H.R. 5122), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER appointed Senators WARNER, MCCAIN, INHOFE, ROBERTS, SESSIONS, COLLINS, ENSIGN, TALENT, CHAMBLISS, GRAHAM, DOLE, CORNYN, THUNE, LEVIN, KENNEDY, BYRD, LIEBERMAN, REED of Rhode Island, AKAKA, NELSON of Florida, NELSON of Nebraska, DAYTON, BAYH, and CLINTON conferees on the part of the Senate.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, with respect to S. 2766 and 2767, 2768, and 2769, just passed by the Senate, that if the Senate receives a message with respect to any of these bills from the House of Representatives, the Senate disagree with the House on its amendment or amendments to the Senate-passed bill and agree to or request a conference, as appropriate, with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses, that the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees; and that the foregoing occur without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I again thank all of our colleagues in the Chamber, the floor staff, and so many others, indeed our new group of pages, indeed, the distinguished professional staff who are at the dais this moment, none of them looking at me or paying any attention to what I say, may I express my profound appreciation to them and to the many reporters who come silently, do their work and disappear with equal silence, unnoticed, but who provide this great body with a

flawless record of accuracy. I thank each and every one.

If there is no other Senator seeking recognition, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes, followed by Senator TALENT and following that, as much time as Senator BYRD might consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to thank the distinguished Senator from Virginia, Mr. WARNER, and Senator LEVIN of Michigan for their leadership in getting this legislation passed and for accepting language from legislation that I have sponsored, the National Guard Equipment Accountability Act, and making it part of the Defense authorization bill we just passed. They have done an outstanding job managing this legislation on the floor.

I also thank the Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN, the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. DODD, and the cochair of the Senate National Guard Caucus, Mr. LEAHY, who also cosponsored this important legislation.

As a nation, we have a solemn duty to honor, prepare and properly equip all the men and women in uniform. The National Guard and Reserve are an essential part of our national defense, and confronting our enemies in distant lands is one of their obligations. Responding to threats here at home is another. In Washington State, the threats of volcanos, tsunamis, and other natural disasters are never far from our minds. We are aware of our porous northern border and the threat that poses to our safety and security. We know that the National Guard is not only the first line of response but also the first line of defense. Whether it is Mount St. Helens or floods or a variety of issues, we know the National Guard in Washington State has been there when we need them most.

They do more than just preserve our security at home. Thousands of National Guard members are currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan—in fact, there are about 500 members of the Washington National Guard deployed overseas. All of those serving in the National Guard make great sacrifices. They accept enormous responsibilities to help us. We owe it to them to make sure their missions are successful and that National Guard members have the resources they need to execute their missions.

Right now, I want to make sure we are upholding our part of the bargain. When our Reserves and National Guard are deployed on operations overseas, they are deployed with equipment from their unit. They go to their mission with the tools that they have trained with—familiar humvees, radios, trucks, whatever it takes to make them successful. While they serve abroad, their equipment actually becomes part of

the greater mission. As a result, when these men and women return home to places like Camp Murray, their equipment often does not return with them. It is left behind, helping other Guard units complete their portion of the mission and to fill in where there are gaps in supplies. The problem is that we have no plan to help the National Guard and Reserve units deal with the loss of that equipment. These returning units are left underequipped and lacking the equipment necessary for continued training for their next deployments.

That is why I offered this language to make sure that we are taking care of this shortfall. According to the Department of Defense, the Army National Guard has left more than 75,000 items valued at \$1.7 billion overseas in ongoing operations. So that is why this language was so important to add to the Defense bill.

Last October, the Government Accountability Office found that at the time the Army, in leaving this equipment and resources behind, did not have a replacement plan. So specifically my amendment codifies language telling the Department of Defense to provide our men and women in uniform with the protection and resources they deserve. The language requires a tracking system of all this equipment and for a replacement plan to make sure that these men and women get the equipment they need in the theaters of operation, when they return home—enabling them to plan ahead for their next mission.

Finally, my amendment would also require a memorandum of understanding, specifying exactly how equipment will be tracked and when it will be returned. This will help our National Guard and Reserve units plan ahead for future obligations and missions. Given the current equipment situation and aggressive use of our National Guard, I believe it is critical that we have them fully equipped for both their missions at home and abroad.

Again, I thank the Senators for helping to get this language into the Defense authorization bill. Our soldiers, our Active Duty, our Reserve units, and the men and women of the Guard have chosen to stand and serve our country with pride and to sacrifice and accept enormous responsibility. We, too, have the responsibility of giving them the resources they need to fulfill their mission. I know this legislation will help them do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from West Virginia for allowing me to go ahead of him for a moment or two. I do want to take a few minutes to talk about an amendment which I cosponsored with Senator NELSON of Florida that passed the Senate in the Defense bill and that addresses a problem which has been growing and